

**Support
someone who
is experiencing
family violence**



**Queensland
Government**

Domestic and family violence harms individuals, families and communities

You may know someone close to you who has been affected by family violence — they could be a friend, relative, co-worker, neighbour or member of your community.

Many people are unsure about what to do if they know someone affected by family violence. This brochure explains what family violence is and how you can support someone experiencing violence or abuse.

What is domestic and family violence?

Family violence is when a person uses abuse or violence to feel in control of others. This can make the person being abused feel unsafe and live in fear. Family violence can happen once, but it usually happens often. It is also family violence if a person gets someone else to carry out the abuse. Domestic and family violence happens in married or de facto relationships but can also involve violence between family members.

For many victims, the violence or abuse may continue even if they have left the relationship. Your support is important. You can help save someone's life.

As a community, we can act together to stop family violence.

Domestic and family violence can be:

- physical abuse such as punching, slapping or pushing, or angry yelling

- controlling what a partner or family member spends
- verbal abuse such as angry yelling or constant 'put downs'
- controlling who a partner or family member talks to or spends time with
- controlling or preventing cultural, religious or spiritual practices
- jealousy and possessiveness, for example, accusing a partner of being unfaithful
- not providing proper care for an older person or person with a disability
- pressuring a partner for sex
- causing damage to property or threatening to do any of the above.

Family violence can happen in all types of relationships.

There are signs that may suggest that someone is experiencing domestic and family violence.

The person may:

- become anxious or depressed, unusually quiet or may lose confidence
- have a partner who continually phones or texts to check on them when away from the house
- seem afraid of their partner or are always very anxious to please them
- be reluctant to leave their children with their partner.

What you can do to support someone

Your help can make a difference. You can help by:

- listening to what your relative, friend or neighbour has to say
- talking to them when they are alone and it is safe to talk
- focusing on how they are feeling and how they are coping
- being open and showing you believe what they tell you
- letting them know the violence is not their fault
- focusing on their safety and their children's safety, if children are involved
- letting them know you are there for them (if this does not put your own safety at risk)
- respecting their right to make their own decisions
- letting them know there is legal help available to address family violence
- understanding that it is not always easy to leave or end an abusive relationship as victims may be afraid or believe the abuse is their own fault
- being aware that some victims of domestic and family violence may not see themselves as being abused
- letting them know there are confidential services to support and provide information, for example, they can visit their local health service or call DVConnect who provide statewide telephone information and advice services for people affected by domestic and family violence.

What you shouldn't do when talking to someone about domestic and family violence. Remember these tips:

- avoid blaming the victim for causing the family violence
 - don't look for excuses — avoid blaming alcohol, drugs, gambling or mental health issues for family violence
 - don't make negative comments about the abusive person — focus on supporting the person being abused
 - be careful not to break confidentiality or place the person being abused at further risk
 - be careful if you talk to the abuser about their behaviour; confronting the abuser about their behaviour may place you and your friend or family member in danger.
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Looking after yourself

Supporting someone who is experiencing family violence can be difficult. You could get some support for yourself by talking to a worker at DVConnect (freecall 1800 811 811 for women or freecall 1800 600 636 for men) or other service providers, a trusted friend, family member or Elder. Remember that your support, whether you realise it or not, is valuable.

Some helpful services

Being familiar with local domestic and family violence services will help you provide greater support to your relative or friend. Remember: Don't let anyone's life be placed in danger. In an emergency, call the police on 000 or ask someone else to contact them for you.

- › **DVConnect Womensline** 1800 811 811, 24 hours, 7 days a week (Womensline assists women to obtain safe refuge accommodation, confidential counselling and referral to other services)

- › **DVConnect Mensline** 1800 600 636, 9am – midnight, 7 days a week (Mensline provides confidential counselling, information and referral to men affected by domestic and family violence)

- › **Kids helpline** freecall 1800 551 800 (for young people up to age 25 years)

- › **Child Safety** on 1800 811 810 or 1800 177 135 (after hours only)

- › **Statewide Sexual Assault Helpline** freecall 1800 010 120 (7.30 am to 11.30 pm, 7 days)

- › **Elder Abuse Prevention Helpline** 1300 651 192 (Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm)

- › **Lifeline** 13 11 14 (24 hour crisis counselling line)

› **National Relay Service**

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact the National Relay Service on:

- TTY users phone TTY/voice calls 133 677
- Speak and Listen users phone 1300 555 727

› **SMS relay service** text 0423 677 767

Domestic and family violence support services

Domestic and family violence services provide support, counselling, referral and information to people affected by family violence.

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| Brisbane | 07 3217 2544 |
| Cairns | 07 4033 6100 |
| Caboolture | 07 5498 9533 |
| Emerald | 07 4982 4358 |
| Gold Coast | 07 5532 9000 |
| Mackay | 07 4957 3888 |
| Ipswich | 07 3816 3000 |
| Ipswich Rural free call | 1800 026 262 |
| Roma | 07 4622 5230 |
| Logan City | 07 3808 5566 |
| Toowoomba | 07 4639 3605 |
| Sunshine Coast | 07 5430 9300 |
| Townsville | 07 4721 2888 |
| Mura Kosker (Thursday Island) | 07 4069 1663 |
| Wondin-dee (South Burnett) | 07 4169 5940 |
| Cooktown District Community Centre | 07 4069 6098 |

For further information, please visit
www.qld.gov.au/domesticviolence

To order additional copies of this booklet
email [Violence_Prevention_Team@
communities.qld.gov.au](mailto:Violence_Prevention_Team@communities.qld.gov.au)

Disclaimer: The information in this brochure
is offered as a guide only and should not
be treated as an exhaustive guide on the
subject.



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